

MAKING TRACKS



BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 1998 ISSUE

ANZEL CONLEY: 60 YEARS OF HEAVEN ON EARTH



For over six decades, Anzel Conley has lived and worked in Butte Falls. In 1926, Anzel relocated with his parents and family from the valley to Butte Falls. As a young boy, Anzel went to Mt. Pitt School. His family lived in the Baker Cabin log house located on Baker Flats. "We got our water from Whiskey Springs," Anzel recalls. "Along with our family, there were five or six other logging families on the Flats."

Mt. Pitt School contained grades 1-8. Anzel attended Butte Falls schools from the 6th grade on when the districts consolidated. Fellow classmates at Mt. Pitt School include brothers, Floyd and Charles McCabe, and the Tungates. Anzel remembers his teacher, Mrs. Gertrude Stanley. Her husband, Roy Stanley's brother, Tom, would pick up children when the

weather was bad with a team of horses and escort them to school. Tom lived in the vicinity of Willow Lake. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley's son, Bertland, was also a fellow classmate.

In the Class of '36, Anzel graduated from Butte Falls High School. He started his first job while still in school working during the summer maintaining trails for the Forest Service. Anzel remembers fondly his days packing into remote areas with mules carrying food and bedding.

Upon finishing school, Anzel landed a job with Medco which lasted 50 years and two days to be exact. "Things are a lot different today. Day and night logs were hauled out of Butte Falls. Roads were all dirt. There were wooden sidewalks in town," Anzel recalls.

"Besides there are a lot more people today. For instance, there were only 15 students in school, compared to today," Anzel added.

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"To move freely, you must be deeply rooted."

ONCE THERE WERE TREES AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE

By Joyce Hailicka

At one time, much of Oregon looked the way Butte Falls does today. The vast forests of Oregon did not attract much attention until around 1890 through the 1900's. There were trees as far as they eye could see. Oregon had one half of all the standing timber in the entire Pacific Northwest.

History is like the roots which nourish the tree. Although we cannot see them, we know they are there. And without the roots there would be no tree. The history of Butte Falls, and how it got its start, is important to who we are today. The only clue to what a person can do is by what men have done before him. The history of our town, as it exists today, came into existence over the last century.

Oregon forests were considered "more trouble than they were worth." So many trees made the land too expensive to clear. But, by the turn-of-the-century, the forests of Michigan and

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ANZEL CONLEY (continued)

"The winter of 1936 was a bad winter. There was lots of snow. And on top of that, the roads weren't plowed," he added. "On Saturdays we had chores, come rain or shine. We'd bring in wood, raise a butcher pig or cow, and before refrigeration, everything had to be canned including meat," he added. There were six people in the Conley family, three boys and a girl. Anzel's father, Clay, worked for Owen-Oregon which later became Medford Corporation. His mother, Viola, raised the family consisting of Anzel, the oldest, daughter Zola (Ellefson), a son who was killed in a logging accident, and Virgil, who still resides in Butte Falls.

It has been wisely said that the most precious possessions that come to a man in this world are a good wife and good children. In 1938, Anzel took Ellen to be his bride. They are blessed with two sons, both teachers, Anzel Patrick and Gordon Wayne (nicknamed Mike). Their first home is where the community church now stands across from the park.

The war efforts took Anzel from his beloved home in Butte Falls to basic training thousands of miles from home in Texas. Anzel was assigned Squad Leader of the First Platoon and was later stationed in Italy. He served in the 10th Mountain Division ski troops. Anzel's troop was responsible for packing in supplies on mules and using trained canine dogs to guard prisoners and search for enemies.

Besides Anzel Conley's stint in the Army, his career began and ended with Medco where he worked faithfully for 50 years and 2 days. Anzel retired in 1986.

When Anzel was asked what his philosophy of life was, he answered: "Do your own thing and let others do theirs."

By Joyce Hailicka

"It's a great satisfaction knowing that for a brief point in time you made a difference."

*'The human contribution
is the essential
ingredient. It is only
in the giving of oneself
to others that we
truly live.'*

*"All paths lead to the same goal:
to convey to others what we are."*

OUR BRIDGE TO THE PAST COBLEIGH ROAD BRIDGE

The Cobleigh Road Bridge is a single 200' steel span structure over Big Butte Creek, approximately three miles northwest of the City of Butte Falls, Oregon. The Parker truss style bridge was originally constructed in 1913 as the second Bybee Bridge over the Rogue River. The bridge was dismantled circa 1950, in advance of the construction of the third Bybee Bridge, and stored for several years until it was reassembled at the present location over Big Butte Creek. Owned by Jackson County, the bridge was not ranked with Register-eligible bridges in the Oregon Department of Transportation's comprehensive evaluation of historic highway bridges of 1985, due to the late reconstruction date (1953) and the lack of detailed historical research on the structure. The bridge was acknowledged in Historic Highway Bridges of Oregon, brought out by ODOT the following year. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office has determined that the bridge is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Completed late in 1913, the Cobleigh Road Bridge was a product of unprecedented growth in bridge development associated with the rise of the automobile as the primary mode of surface transportation during the first quarter of the 20th century. Jackson County, a leader in the "Good Roads" movement became the first Oregon county to vote bond funding for road improvement under a state enabling act, passing a \$500,000 measure in 1911-12. Locally, the period was one of phenomenal growth both economically and in population. Within the context of bridge technology, the steel through, Parker, truss of the Cobleigh Road Bridge is representative of the movement away from wooden systems towards steel structures, an engineering advancement predicated on improvements in steel manufacturing during the late 19th century. Except for the Southern Pacific Railroad Bridge over the Rogue River at Gold Hill (1906), the Cobleigh Road Bridge represents the oldest example of steel bridge construction in Jackson County, and the oldest automobile related bridge of any construction type to be identified.

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BOARD MEMBERS

Cory Hamann (President)
Bev Carrillo

Dan Murphy
Joyce Hailicka, Chairman

THE BILL EDMONDSON MEMORIAL MUSEUM AND CABOOSE HOURS
SATURDAY 10 - 4 P.M. AND SUNDAY 1-4 P.M.

HOSTESS: KAETE THOMPSON 865-3333
NELLIE RAGSDALE 865-3332

ONCE THERE WERE TREES AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE (continued)

Wisconsin were extensively logged. Some of the mills in the Mid-West moved into the Southern forests. Others moved out West.

Even before the mills came, the owners started buying up timberlands in areas like Butte Falls. Soon mills sprung up throughout Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Lumbering became Oregon's main industry. Dr. Jeff LaLande gives us the following account of how Butte Falls got its start as a timber community.

No town actually existed in Big Butte Country until after 1900. In the early 1900's, Michigan-based lumbermen began cutting pine timber on the flats above Big Butte Creek. The sawmill, a water-powered operation was situated at the Falls. The mill led to the founding of the nearby town. Families of loggers, millworkers, and a few merchants lived in homes around the "Town Square". By 1910, the Pacific and Eastern Railroad reached Butte Falls from Medford. We were no longer isolated from our neighbors.

For the next half century, the town's destiny would be linked to the railroad. The fate of the various lumber companies depended on the railway. During the 1920's, the Wisconsin-based Owen-Oregon Lumber Company extended the line east of Butte Falls. The railroad logged the pine flats all the way to Mt. McLoughlin. The main line carried logs daily to a new mill on the outskirts of Medford.

During the Great Depression, the bankrupted Owen-Oregon firm turned its assets over to its Chicago-based creditors, who formed Medford Corporation in 1932. The new company struggled through the hard times of the Depression, as did the town residents. In 1936, the economy of Butte Falls got a slight boost when the Forest Service built a new ranger station on the southeast edge of town. Today, the building serves as district offices and additional classrooms for the schools.

World War II brought renewed prosperity to the Pacific Northwest's timber industry. Recent years have seen much controversy over logging in the Northwest. The region's lumber industry has also experienced major changes in technology. Butte Falls has had to adapt to these changes. Butte Falls remains proud of its heritage as a small Oregon logging community.

As the pendulum of history continues to swing, small towns like Butte Falls will continue to clamor for dollars for needed infrastructure improvements, repairs, services, and economic opportunities. A group of committed citizens and organizations are working to obtain grants and funding to repair streets, water system, bring back the Medco train, and build a new water bottling facility.



After nearly a century, Butte Falls is still a new frontier. What can we learn from our history? Why learn about history? Because our history is part of who we are. The Historical Society can help serve as a catalyst for the community to recognize the importance of who we are and where we've been.

Some people have said Butte Falls has never changed. Yet, history teaches us that change is as natural as the seasons. And Butte Falls has seen its share of changes as it continues to grow and flourish.

*"Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and
always come back to where they were."*

- - - Black Elk

Tender little memories
Of some word or deed
Give us strength and courage
When we are in need.

COBLEIGH ROAD BRIDGE (continued)

The Cobleigh Road Bridge was moved to its present location near Butte Falls in 1953. It is one of the few remaining Parker Truss bridges in Southern Oregon and the sole standing bridge documented as the work of early 20th century bridge contractor Edward G. Perham. The oldest auto-related steel through truss bridge in Jackson County, the Cobleigh Road Bridge constitutes a significant and rare example of its type within the context of Jackson County. The Cobleigh Road Bridge is tangible evidence of the gradual development of methods of spanning waterways - - methods which have included fords, ferries, wooden spans, covered bridges, and metal structures.

MONTH BY MONTH YEAR IN REVIEW 1997

- January- New Year's Day Flood
 - Butte Falls to Prospect Highway collapsed
 - Butte Falls Downtown Development Assoc. Active
 - Amber Hersom Fundraiser
 - Henry Englehart disappeared
- March- Butte Falls Master Plan Underway
- April- Ginger Springs Waterbottling Planning Process
 - Services for JoAnn Dyer
 - Railroad Meetings/restoration work underway
- May- Clara Edmondson services
 - Annual Family Fun Run
- June- Services for Jim Matthews
 - Children's Garden
- July- Dedication of Toddler Playground in Park
- August- BBHS Photography Class, "A Day in the Life of Butte Falls Through the Eyes of a Child"
 - Falls Park Meeting
- Oct. - BBHS Workshop - "The Inventive Mind"
 - Waterbottling Master Plan Completed
 - Town pursues grant for water system
 - Water Commission established
- Nov. - Cycle OR requests return visit to BF in Sept. 1998

Little Known Facts About Butte Falls

FACT #1

Sharing our "natural resources" sounds like modern day terminology. But did you know that the people of Medford decided to use Fish Lake as their water supply for the city as early as 1909? The water was carried from Fish Lake to the valley via old wooden pipeline. This line was used until another was installed from Big Butte Springs above Butte Falls in 1927. Today Butte Falls is still known for its pristine water.

FACT #2

Did you know that the Southern Oregon Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society purchased the original Baldwin #8 diesel locomotive which was used to haul logs between Butte Falls and Medford? This locomotive was the only diesel loco owned by Medco. It was built for Medco in 1952. The Baldwin #8 was purchased from the Magma Arizona Railroad Company. Members of NRHS have done extensive fund-raising and work to restore the engine. It is temporarily being stored at Superior Lumber Sorting Yard. NRHS is committed to rebuilding a portion of the former Medford Corporation logging railroad and operating it as a scenic excursion train in conjunction with the Big Butte Historical Society and the Town of Butte Falls.

The proposed railroad is intended to maintain an important part of history which is unique to this area. Anyone who wishes to learn more about the Southern Oregon Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society or the status of the proposed Butte Falls railroad restoration project may write to:

Southern Oregon Chapter NRHS
Jerry Hellinga/President
4300 West Griffin Creek Road
Medford, OR 97501

*Our Past is Our
Present to You*

PLEASE JOIN US!

MAIL TO:
Big Butte Historical Society
P. O. Box 379, Butte Falls, OR 97522

Now that you heard about BBHS, why not get to know us even better by becoming a volunteer!
We'll look forward to having you join us!

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Here's how I can be of help:

_____ I'd like to _____

_____ Tell me more about being a board member.

_____ I could be a guest speaker. My topic: _____

_____ I'd like to help with fundraising efforts.

_____ I do not have time to volunteer at this time but I would like to make a monetary contribution to this organization.



*W*ithin our family there was no such thing as a person who did not matter. Second cousins thrice removed mattered. We knew—and thriftily made use of—everybody's middle name. We knew who was buried where. We all mattered, and the dead most of all.

Shirley Abbott

KID'S PAGE !!!

by Lee Rydberg

What is History? His (or her) story!

Do you know an older person who has an interesting story to tell? If so, write down their story in your own words and bring it to the Bill Edmondson Memorial Museum. Don't forget to put your name, age, and phone number. We will award 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes. These stories will also be printed in our next newsletter.

Wagon Trail Butter

Would you like to make butter the way the pioneers did?

You will need a clean jar with a lid, fill it half way with cold cream and a pinch of salt. Then add three marbles! Now dance around the house for 10 minutes shaking the jar. At the same time you will be shaking all your sillies out! The cream will thicken and then separate. You should have a portion of delicious butter and a few sips of buttermilk. Put the butter in your refrigerator for a few minutes so it can harden. Now share with a friend!

WORD SEARCH

Q	U	P	R	L	I	B	R	A	R	Y	C	H	I	E	N
G	U	C	H	E	M	Q	E	O	K	F	E	R	S	T	U
Z	C	A	X	B	L	A	K	Y	Q	H	H	E	O	I	R
O	H	U	B	A	B	C	X	U	Z	F	I	L	M	W	R
A	I	P	S	U	M	R	Q	P	E	P	S	P	E	N	R
T	C	N	I	P	T	I	Z	R	A	B	T	I	G	D	W
A	O	M	D	D	P	T	N	Y	N	O	O	F	A	O	I
G	W	U	P	H	I	O	E	T	O	N	R	M	H	A	L
E	O	S	M	C	T	T	R	F	O	O	Y	P	A	E	S
R	W	E	W	O	T	O	D	S	A	T	O	C	N	K	I
B	C	U	Z	U	A	R	W	Y	M	L	C	H	M	I	C
C	A	M	P	G	R	O	U	N	D	W	L	P	I	E	L
K	E	N	P	I	E	S	A	N	D	W	I	S	C	H	L
B	U	T	F	E	K	A	L	W	O	L	L	I	W	L	E

Library
Butte Falls
Campground

History
Town
Imnaha

Fern
Museum

BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER'S LIST 2/1/97 - 2/1/98

Elga & Emogene Abbott
John & Candace Adams
Vernon Arnold
Warren & Charlene Brown
Carlos & Bev Carrillo
Hannah Nunn Dalton
Warren Dunning
Marc Ellis
Ethel Geleta
Jake & Vicky Green
Ron & Joyce Hailicka
Don & Cory Hamann
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Scott & Pamela Waddell
Bob & Beverly Watson
Frank & Dottie Villa

Thank you for your wonderful support!



This is a picture of Bill Moore standing in what remains of a foxhole.

GOTCHA COVERED!

Speaking of water . . .

Drip. Drip. Drip. . . . after several years of exposure to the elements, the Historical Society decided it was time to put the Caboose Museum under cover. With the help of Bill Tucker, Terry Schultz, and his crew, the Caboose is protected from the weather. Thanks for the nice design and work.

"We're still not where we're going but we're still not where we were."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FOXHOLES AND MILITARY MANEUVERS IN BUTTE FALLS

INTERVIEW WITH BILL MOORE BY ELLEN MOORE

Bill Moore was a 9 year old child when the Army practiced maneuvers in the area surrounding his family's ranch on the Obenchain Road. He recalls them bringing in half-trucks, trucks, jeeps, guns, etc. The soldiers also dug a lot of foxholes. Many of these can still be seen in the area.

One of them is across the road from the corral on the Obenchain. There was a machine gun set up there with several more foxholes around it. Bill and his brother, Jim, got in trouble for following the soldiers around. They thought it was all play! A few times, during heavy rainstorms, the soldiers would sleep in the barn. Bill's folks kept a milk cow in the barn. One time, his father forgot to tell the troops, that if the cow's bell bothered them, to remove it. The next morning, he asked them if the bell had kept them awake. They replied that they had only heard it a couple of times. After they had gone, they found the bell hanging on a nail.

Another time, the family came home and found a neatly folded Eisenhower jacket folded on the back of a chair. Someone had come in, fixed themselves something to eat, cleaned up the mess, and evidently left the jacket in payment.



Big Butte Historical Society
Overview for 1998

January - \$22,000 received from County Historical Tax Fund, donation of an original historical oil painting (4' x 9'). Horse-drawn log skidder. Hung in the main office entry at Medco for many years. Painting to be hung in the Butte Falls Community Hall. To remain property of the Historical Society. Donated by former Medco employee: Tracy Willis.

Historical photos from the Medco files (Rogue River National Forest Collection) were donated. Some photos dating back to 1907. Donated by Tracy Willis.

February - Deadline newsletter February 13.

"Make An Old-Fashioned Valentine's Card" for children of all ages.

March Spring Break March 23 - 27. "Make your own Easter Bonnet".

April - "Inventive Mind Workshop II". Ages 7-17. Bring your own homemade invention. Awards.

May - Holiday Memorial Day activity Butte Falls Cemetery. Spring newsletter deadline May 15, 1998. "Make-A-Mother's Day Card", Saturday, May 9.

June/July - Restoration of EW Smith's Workshop; Children's Garden; Program for children sponsored by SOHS "Early Days of Logging". Through September county-wide quilt shows and fairs. Feature local hand-make quilts at museum.

August - Summer newsletter deadline August 14, 1998. 2nd Anniversary and Open House featuring workshop restoration of EW Smith's shop.

September - Cycle OR returns to Butte Falls September 14-15, 1998. Theme: "It's A Wonderful Life — Welcome Back" 1940's.

October - Fall newsletter deadline October 16, 1998.

November - Holidays Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving. World War II and Life in Butte Falls Exhibit.

December - Christmas Holidays. Old-fashion tree ornament collection and display. Christmas cookies and refreshments for all visitors during December.

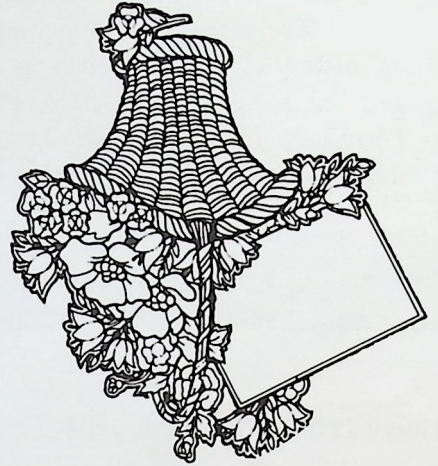
Written By
Ernest W. Smith (1919)

As I gaze onto the distance, from this mountain's dizzy height,
I am but a feeble witness to the awe inspiring sight
Of the vast expanse of mountains, and the valleys in between,
Of the lakes, and of the marshes, painted brown and blue and green
Of the sunrise in the morning, and the sunset ere the night
Closes down her long black curtain, hiding all this from my sight.

Found in
Old Smith House 5/82

But the night time has its beauties with its lights so far away,
With the stars that light the heavens, and the moonlight in the bay.
I see the campfires of the hunters, which the chase loudly calls.
O'er the mountains in the distance, see the lights of Klamath Falls.
I have seen way to the Southward, as it wound its toilsome way,
Seen the headlights of an engine, sending out its searching ray.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
Today strive to do better than yesterday.



BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 379
Butte Falls, OR 97522

Barbara Hegne
Curator of EPHS
421 Stevens Road
Eagle Point OR 97524

To Our Neighbor

